IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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For immediate release

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TAKE CARE DURING MANURE APPLICATION

INWOOD – Manure applicators can learn from a land application incident near Inwood which resulted in manure reaching a tributary of the Rock River after a hose kinked up.

Although the manure applicator, Mike VerSteeg, was able to act quickly and prevent nearly half of the 2500-gallon spill from reaching the stream, he would have been able to respond faster if someone had been manning the pump.

“This case illustrates how minutes can make a difference when accidents happen,” said Cindy Martens, environmental specialist with the Spencer DNR field office. “It’s important to be prepared for accidents, carry a simple spill prevention kit and stay in communication with others on your team.”

A spill kit could include PVC pipe, or garbage bags and duct tape to cover tile intakes; sand bags or hay bales to keep manure from spreading; and a shovel.

Martens also recommended that applicators keep equipment in good repair, avoid application on saturated soils and steeper ground, and to get as much rest as possible.

The manure spill near Inwood occurred during application with a drag hose system on April 14. When the hose kinked, pressure in the line built up and caused piping to become uncoupled in two places. Manure continued to flow for several minutes until someone could reach the pump and shut it down.

Although a temporary dam was built to block manure, part of the manure had already reached the tributary before the dam was completed.

“I didn’t find elevated ammonia levels in the stream, but field tests showed ammonia levels in excess of 250 parts per million (ppm) behind the dike,” said Martens.

Martens said that she didn’t see any fish in the small stream, dead or alive, but other manure applicators should be aware that most liquid manure has high levels of ammonia and that fish begin dying when ammonia levels are at between 3 and 8 ppm of ammonia.

The manure came from an earthen basin serving a 950-head sow unit. The DNR required VerSteeg to pump and land apply as much manure as possible from behind the dam.

For more information, contact Cindy Martens at 712-262-4177.

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UPDATE OF MAJOR WATER SOURCES MAY AFFECT ANIMAL CONFINEMENT SITING

DES MOINES – Animal producers planning to build, modify or expand their confinement operations should check for recent revisions in the list of major water sources.

New and expanding facilities must be built at least 1,000 feet from all major water sources. This separation distance is not new and it applies to proposed facilities of all sizes, even those with less than 500 animal units.

“What is new for producers is the list of these major water sources was recently updated to correct some technical errors and increase consistency across the state,” said Gene Tinker, coordinator of animal feeding operations for the DNR.

Tinker added that facilities that submitted a construction permit application or manure management plan (MMP) to the DNR prior to April 5 can use the list of major water sources that was in effect on the date of their submittal. For proposed facilities that do not need a construction permit or MMP, the date that applies is when construction began.

The new list applies to all proposed confinement buildings submitting MMPs or construction permit applications after April 5. It also applies to proposed smaller confinement facilities.

The list of major water sources can be found in Tables 1 and 2 of Chapter 65 of the Iowa Administrative Code. Or, producers can find Tables 1 and 2 on the DNR Web site at http://www.iowadnr.com/afo/newrules.html.

The major water sources are also shown on the DNR's AFO Siting Atlas, part of the Interactive Mapping Web site. Check http://csbweb.igsb.uiowa.edu/imsgate/introduction/home.asp for maps that show major water sources, karst terrain and alluvial soils.

"I'd like to remind all producers who are thinking about expansion or new construction to consider the separation distances that apply," said Tinker. "Not only are there separation distances from buildings, but there are separation distances required from environmentally sensitive areas such as water sources, public and private wells, ag drainage wells and public thoroughfares."

More information can be found on the DNR Web site at www.iowadnr.com.

For more information, contact Gene Tinker at (515) 281-3103.

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CROP AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS, TEST SOILS NOW FOR THE P INDEX - STARTING IN SEPTEMBER

DES MOINES – Confinement site producers who aren't using the phosphorus or P index to develop their required manure management plans (MMP) should plan now and soil sample this spring to incorporate the P index into their MMPs.

Crop producers who accept manure from confinements that need manure management plans may also want to talk to their manure provider about how the P index could affect manure application on their land and if they need to have soil samples taken.

Producers can use soil samples taken in the last four years to run the P index, if they meet the minimum requirements.

"If you need to be using the P index with your manure management plan starting this fall, spring may be the last chance to sample soils before the crops get too tall," said Jeremy Klatt, a nutrient specialist with the DNR. "And, you will need those soil test results to run the P index and revise your MMP."

Klatt recommended sampling soils for phosphorus and acidity (pH) before fertilizer or manure application. "If that's not possible, giving time for the fertilizer or manure to react with the soil will reduce the variability of soil test results," he said.

Producers can sample soils using any credible method, but should take at least one sample for every 10 acres of the field. Generally, Iowa State University's soil sampling recommendations should be followed.

By testing soil now, producers will have more time to make adjustments if the P index shows that a field is at high risk for phosphorus to reach surface waters. They could

install more conservation practices, change their feeding regime to reduce phosphorus concentrations in the manure or find additional application fields.

Klatt said that many confinement producers will need to use the P index starting with their first annual MMP update after August 25 this fall. The remainder of confinement producers will need to use the P index starting in September of 2008.

The DNR will not be granting exemptions or extensions of the deadlines for the P index-based plans. See the DNR Web site for a timeline or more information about the P index: http://www.iowadnr.com/afo/mmp.html#phosphorus or http://www.iowadnr.com/afo/files/pindex_fs.pdf.

Check the Iowa State University soil fertility Web site for information about soil sampling at extension.agron.iastate.edu/soilfertility/. Finally, more information about the P index can be found in current and back issues of Odor and Nutrient Management at the Iowa Manure Management Action Group's Web site at http://extension.agron.iastate.edu/immag/pubsnl.html.

For more information, contact Jeremy Klatt at 641-424-4073.

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